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RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE PRIORITY 4358
RUEHKS/AMCONSUL SAPPORO PRIORITY 1742
RUEHSH/AMCONSUL SHENYANG PRIORITY 0476
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY
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RUAGAAA/COMUSKOREA SEOUL KOR PRIORITY
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TOKYO 001791

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [JA](#)

SUBJECT: PRC PREMIER WEN'S VISIT TO JAPAN: ICE MELTING, BUT
WATER STILL COOL

REF: A. TOKYO 1743

- [1](#)B. BEIJING 2680
- [1](#)C. TOKYO 1555
- [1](#)D. BEIJING 2483
- [1](#)E. BEIJING 2481

Classified By: Ambassador J. Thomas Schieffer. Reasons 1.4 (B) (D)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary. PRC Embassy contacts told Embassy Tokyo that Beijing views Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao's April 11-13 Tokyo visit as a "100 percent success." Wen and Japan PM Abe adopted a "forward-looking view" and attempted to build trust, while Tokyo further defined the nature of the "strategic mutually beneficial relationship" which Japan promotes as its core policy vis--vis China. Beijing and Tokyo made progress on the East China Sea dispute by agreeing to raise the level of talks over the disputed region. Wen, noting that one visit would not suffice to solve all the problems between the PRC and Japan, observed "the ice is melting, but the water is still cool." End Summary.

100 Percent Success

[1](#)2. (C) On April 18, PRC Embassy First Secretary Liu Jinsong provided Embassy political officer a readout on the April 11-13 visit of Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao. Liu used four words to describe Wen's visit:

-- Important: the Chinese viewed the trip as "100 percent successful." Wen underwent meticulous briefing for his meetings. The Premier visited Tokyo 14 years ago as a junior government official.

-- Complicated: Despite the success of PM Abe's October 2006 visit to China, PRC-Japan relations still faced many hurdles, including the East China Sea and history. Liu said that China had been angered by a recent Japanese high court decision holding that the 1972 Joint PRC-Japan agreement renouncing PRC government claims against Tokyo barred individuals from suing Japan for war-related issues.

-- Sensitive: Both leaders faced internal political

pressures; Abe from lower and upper house elections, and Wen from conservative elements critical of attempts to develop closer ties with Tokyo.

-- Successful: During the course of a 56-hour visit, Wen participated in 30 separate activities, seven of which occurred with Abe.

Relations Improving

¶3. (C) Elaborating on the success of Wen's visit, Liu described PRC-Japan relations as: 1) solid - leaders took a "forward-looking view" and attempted to build trust; 2) changing focus - the two sides further defined the nature of the "strategic mutually beneficial relationship" which Japan promotes as its core policy vis--vis China; and 3) improving - PRC leaders believe Wen succeeded in improving China's public relations image among the Japanese public and media.

East China Sea

¶4. (C) Beijing and Tokyo made progress on the East China Sea dispute, according to Liu, by agreeing to raise the level of talks over the disputed region. China, which disagreed with Japan on the size of the area in dispute, agreed to include considerably more square miles of the contested region in the negotiations.

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Ice Melting, But Water Still Cool

¶5. (C) According to Liu, Wen maintained, however, that one visit would not suffice to solve all the problems between the PRC and Japan, reportedly saying "The ice is melting, but the water is still cool. Warming the water remains a big task."

Comment

¶6. Liu's comments confirm what we've been hearing from our Japanese contacts: The Wen visit was a successful step forward, but the two sides still have a long way to go to reach a truly constructive relationship. Knotty issues remain unresolved. Maintaining the good will displayed by both sides during the Wen visit could help ease the way forward.
SCHIEFFER